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Canada, Mexico And United States Release Harmonized North American BSE Strategy

WASHINGTON, April 1, 2005-The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that Canada, Mexico and the United States have established a harmonized approach to bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) risk mitigation to more effectively address any BSE risk in North America.

This science-based framework of risk management measures for BSE has been developed with the objective to help normalize trade in ruminants and ruminant products within North America and to promote an international BSE strategy consistent with World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) guidelines. The strategy also represents the integrated North American approach that will be presented to the OIE as part of any further discussions to promote international harmonization of BSE risk mitigation measures through the OIE.

The minimum standards defined in the report have not been codified throughout North America. Rather, they will be considered by the appropriate animal health and public health officials in each country through their respective regulatory processes. These recommendations do not change the requirements in place for products currently being traded. The report is available on the APHIS Web site at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>.

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